

Paul calls for investigation of National Marine Fisheries Service *Says federal agency is 'out of control' and must be reigned in now*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, February 6, 1998 WASHINGTON, DC - In a letter to House Resources Committee Chairman Don Young (R-AK), US Representative Dr. Ron Paul has requested that Congress look into charges that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has engaged in activities in violation of the Magnuson/Stevens Act.

Quoting extensively from a January 26 letter written by Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council Chairman Maumus Claverie, Paul says it is time to reign in the agency.

"The Gulf Council is a congressionally created oversight panel and the Chairman of that panel has clearly indicated that the National Marine Fisheries Service is not merely engaged in mismanagement of the fisheries, but that by their overreaching interpretations of law are actually acting in violation of the Magnuson/Stevens Act," said Paul.

Paul continued by pointing out "this is one of those bureaucracies which is totally confused about the way things are supposed to work in America, they clearly think the people are the servants of the government when in fact our Constitution says it is the other way around. From very early in my term I have had to fight with this agency to stop its repeated attacks on fishermen and the shrimping industry, every time we enjoy a success, they simply come at us from a new angle, I am tired of their abuse and it is time for Chairman Young to act to stop this."

Paul said he has had a bill drafted which would repeal the Magnuson/Stevens Act entirety. Paul added that if his call for an investigation is unsuccessful, or if NMFS continues to attack constituents of the 14th District, he will introduce the legislation immediately.

"The federal government has no constitutional role to regulate fishing," said Paul. "This legislation is proof of how things go haywire when an unconstitutional agency is allowed to run rampant. I have tried to work with this agency within the bounds of the existing law, but it is now apparent from the letter which I received from the Chairman of the Gulf Council, that NMFS will go outside of the law in order to harass fishermen and the shrimping industry. It is becoming ever more apparent that we are going to need to repeal this act and abolish NMFS and let Texans decide what is best for fishing in Texas; but as long as the agency exists, Congress must act to get it under control."

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